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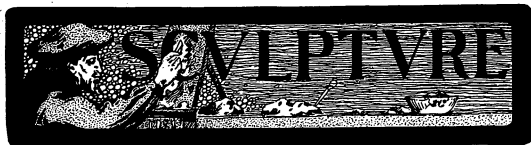
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DAUBIGNY.  
THE FARM BY THE SEA.  
38 x 58.



THE TRADE OF SCULPTURE.

BY courtesy, Sculpture figures as an art, as one of the Fine Arts, when these are defined or mentioned. Its practitioners are classed among artists, and are popularly supposed to possess the high qualities that should characterize the worthy bearers of that proud title. They are credited in the vulgar mind with spontaneous, irrepressible, overflowing invention, which will not be stayed or let in demonstrating itself; with the high aims and lofty ideals that belong in a world apart from and independent of the work-a-day sphere that harbors the rest of us; as prophets, mute of lip, but eloquent of gesture, pointing mankind onward and upward with the raised finger of Faith, or the imaged Victory for valor, through the forms of their creation. But, alas! what a change comes, o'er the spirit of the dreamer, when he peers more closely into the subject, and scrutinizes the actual condition of the supposed art!

Instead of the free-flowing conception, we find the practitioners of to-day working within limits, often, if not usually, of their own seeking, and carrying on their work in the most undisguised mercantile manner. Instead of displaying poetic feeling or prophetic insight, we find them re-hashing the relics of classical antiquity (and doing it very badly) or imitating the available subjects of Renaissance times, or badly conveying (as the wise and Shakespeare call it) the results of contemporary or recent foreign or otherwise obscure workers.

It used to be said in the early days of photography, when the daguerreotype was in vogue, that any man who was useless for other purposes became a "portrait artist"; and, with due respect to the few notable exceptions who would be an honor to any calling, it seems as if a similar statement might be made applicable to-day to the sculptors' trade. At all events, the number of professionals who are earning a precarious subsistence by the sweat of their brows but not their brains, needs an explanation further than that offered by the indifference of the public. The public is quite right to be indifferent—if so be that this is actually the case, which is open to argument—to the majority of the things turned out by the traders. They are honestly enough wrought, perhaps; and acceptable to some unformed minds; but in them no flash of genius, no atom of inspiration is manifest; there is no imagination, no uplift.

Of course, these workmen say "We must live—and we cannot afford to do what fancy prompts—and we must get a commission by luck or good management."

And so they get their trade-union, and admit or exclude according to fancy, and pull the municipal leg as opportunity offers, and over it all drape the panoply of art with a large A! Silly ones! the necessity of living is not proven; their Fancy would not know how to move, were it unshackled from "commissions," and these same "commissions" are a euphemism for the limitations that fetter the fancy. They mean that the man who should be the creator abdicates in favor of the payer; and follows his or her whims and notions, because of the pay. Not so with the old and true artists, who were looked up to, and justly, by their fellow citizens; their advice sought and their opinions followed, as if oracles in their kind!

So prevalent is this trading conception, that even the best equipped among our sculptors cannot wholly escape; and it is not unjust to say that some of the foremost reputations have been won as much by the display of business abilities of no mean order, as by native worth.

What of it? Nothing, except to be exact in our language, and speak of the trade of sculpture, instead of the art, when most contemporary work is referred to.

SEEDOU LE YUSEE.

The most sumptuous art catalogue ever published in this country lies before me. It is Catalogue No. 2 of Early English, Dutch and Flemish Paintings, as found in the Blakeslee Galleries. They do such things in Paris, but even Sedelmeyer never did better—if as well.

The perfection of photography is shown in the thirty-two plates which illustrate the book. The text refers to sixty-two numbers, and is differing from the usual cut-and-dried catalogue information in that it is exceptionally interesting reading. Many of the paintings enumerated have already been disposed of. Of those yet in exhibition at the Blakeslee Galleries, I like to mention a few.

First comes a full-length portrait of Sir William Crofts, by Daniel Mytens, the equal of Van Dyck, whom he preceded as court painter to Charles I. Not many Mytens are found in this country; this one must surely surpass them all. The portrait of Anna Maria Schurman, by Ferdinand Bol, many of whose portraits have been ascribed to Rembrandt, has the warm tone which marks Bol, the master of morbidezza. The "Achilles," by Rembrandt, is a vigorous young knight, in technique a marvel of chiaroscuro.

A portrait painter contemporaneous to Rembrandt, but of entirely different manner, more leaning towards the handling of Van Dyck, Mytens and Cornelius Janssens was Adrian Hanneman, whose works (not many of them) are distributed among the collections at Hampton Court, Vienna, Rotterdam, Frankfurt, and elsewhere. I do not recall at the moment of any example being at Amsterdam, or even The Hague, which was his birthplace and where most of his work was done, with the exception of a short time spent in London. In that period he painted the portrait of Princess Mary, daughter of Charles I. This full-length, life-size painting is a sumptuous work of texture limning. While the face is most attractive, the poise elegant and composed, the art lover will undoubtedly turn to the dexterity by which the heavy white satin gown is painted. It is a beautiful piece of work.

Three landscapes claim yet attention. One is a grand Jacob Ruysdael, from the Colonel Hankey collection, in his noble and impressive manner. An "Old Crome" is a large composition of those sylvan retreats which the founder of the Norwich School infused with sterling vigor. Another landscape (not in the catalogue) is one by Jan Both, whose landscapes, in which his brother Andries so sympathetically blended the figures, are compositions of rare charm and delicate taste. This example is No. 41 in Smith's Catal. Rais. In the Muilman sale, held at Amsterdam in 1813, it brought £93, at the Levy Collection sale it rose to £250. Of course, it is higher now.

The preface to the catalogue is a dignified résumé of the manner in which these schools have been introduced into this country, and is worth quoting. It reads:

"From Holbein to Sir Joshua Reynolds, from Van Dyck and Rubens to Constable and Turner, the Englishman has filled his palace, country house, or town residence with abiding works of the world's best painters, until to-day England is a perfect storehouse of fine pictures. In that remarkable period from 1580 to 1660, when the great painters of Flanders and Holland had difficulty in disposing of their productions at home, they found a ready market across the Channel. The result is that Rembrandt, Hals, Hobbema, Van Dyck, Rubens, Jan Steen, Terburg, and a great coterie of the princes of art contributed their masterpieces to make England the repository of their talents.

"It is only of recent years, however, that a proper appreciation of these works has manifested itself in this country. The French painters, by their dexterity and surface qualities, as was natural, appealed to the unformed tastes of the masses, not yet educated to the higher requirements of art; later came the interest in the Barbizon painters, known as "the men of thirty," whose splendid productions, however, were limited; then came the desire for something more lasting than the fashionable, modish, story-telling later Parisians—the intellectual and the artistic were to be satisfied. These requirements were only to be found among the truly great in the history of art; men who had stood the test of time and who had built on strong foundations of truth, seriousness, and masterly ability to draw, construct and color. But these were difficult to obtain.

"The mutations of time, however, have wrought changes in the fortunes of many of England's great families, and there has come occasionally the inevitable need for money. Collections, for one reason or another, have been dispersed; death and the division of great estates have scattered galleries and furnished opportunities to secure masterpieces, for centuries the proud possessions of royalty, nobility or the Croesus of his time.

"Attracted early to these canvases, buying at a time even when there was little market, we have established not only unusual and exclusive relations with English and foreign agents for the securing of these works, but we make bold to lay claim to an expert knowledge of the men, their methods and characteristics, that has enabled us to select intelligently and authoritatively canvases that worthily represent their talent and best efforts. For several years we have dealt almost exclusively in such works, and our importations of recent years have included some of the most important examples of the older masters, and in particular the early Englishmen, from Sir Joshua through all his contemporaries and followers, that have ever been brought to this country.

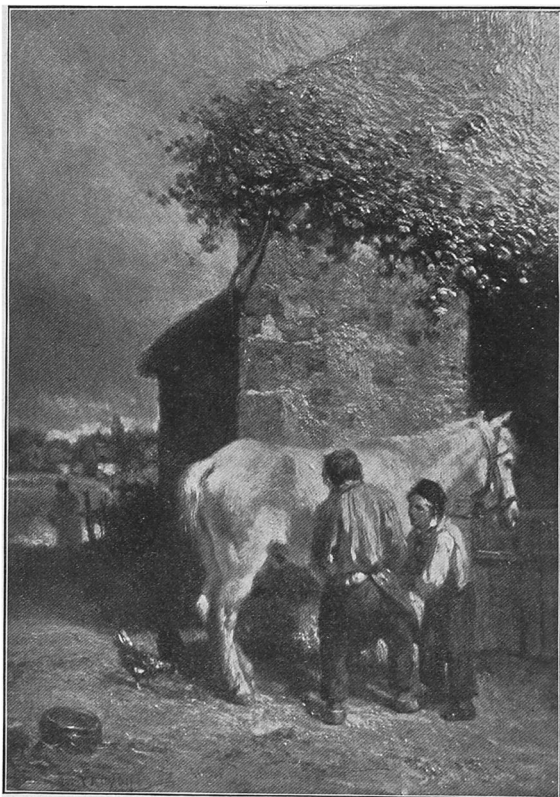
"These canvases we have placed in the galleries of many of the greatest collectors in America, where they remain among their most

prized possessions. In offering this catalogue, which covers, of course, only a minor portion of the paintings in the gallery, and which is the second of a series whereof the first was received with much favor, it is announced that many of the works included since the catalogue was commenced have passed from our possession. It has been deemed wise, however, to allow the reproductions to be included in this edition, and where the permission of the purchaser has been obtained the present ownership is given."

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By a fair estimate there have been over 777 amateur photographers shooting at the Navy Arch since it was finished. I wonder what a mess they made of it—not of the arch, but of their plates. Amateur photography is a seductive and sycereal pastime. But the devotees need encouragement. To get this let them hie themselves to the exhibition of the Photographic Salon at the American Institute at Nos. 19 and 27 West Forty-fourth Street, near Fifth Avenue,—but have a quarter ready for the catalogue. There they can see the best attainments of film-development, light-exposure, printing-methods, that can anywhere be found.

Many of the exhibits, especially the foreign ones, I saw at the Philadelphia exhibition, but some additional good work is to be seen here. Notably the enlarged plates by H. W. Müller, and the photographs by F. A. Bolton, Rudolf Eickemeyer, Jr., Histed, Sid. Sawyer, Hofmeister of Hamburg, Maurice Boucquet, and a few others. Photography can scarcely excel the exquisite transformation of these scenes to the paper. Amateurs will be enthused by viewing the results that may be accomplished. How to do it—*h!* that is another question.



C. TROYON.  
THE FARRIER.  
14 x 11.